

Message Text

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SUBJ: LABOR MINISTER RESPONDS UNFAVORABLY TO ANGLO-AMERICAN
STATEMENT ON BLACK TRADE UNIONS DESPITE CONTINUING
UNREST AND GROWING DISSATISFACTION WITH PRESENT
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM

REF: JOHANNESBURG 0834

1. RESPONDING TO ANGLO-AMERICAN CORPORATION'S RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT
THAT IT WAS PREPARED TO RECOGNIZE AND NEGOTIATE WITH RESPONSIBLE
AND REPRESENTATIVE BLACK TRADE UNIONS (REFTEL) LABOR MINISTER
MARAIS VILJOEN WARNED AUGUST 14 THAT SAG WOULD TAKE ACTION
AGAINST TRADE UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS WHO WENT OUT OF THEIR WAY
TO CIRCUMVENT GOVERNMENT POLICY. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF
VILJOEN'S STATEMENT:

QTE THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTEND REVIEWING THE ORGANISING OF
BANTU WORKERS AGAIN, AND BELIEVES THAT IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF
ALL CONCERNED THAT THE STATUS QUO BE MAINTAINED.

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QTE THE GOVERNMENT FEELS THAT THE EXISTING STATUTORY COMMUNICA-

TION CHANNELS FOR BANTU WORKERS SHOULD BE EXPANDED AND PROPERLY UTILIZED.

QTE AT THE SAME TIME THE GOVERNMENT EXPRESSES ITS DISAPPROVAL AT THE ACTION OF CERTAIN TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS AND CERTAIN EMPLOYER BODIES WHICH GO OUT OF THEIR WAY IN CIRCUMVENTING THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.

QTE IN SUCH CASES THE GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE ACTION IN TERMS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION ACT, 1956. UNQTE

2. REPLYING IMMEDIATELY TO VILJOEN, ANGLO-AMERICAN SAID IT WOULD NOT ACT UNILATERALLY IF SAG DID NOT SANCTION OR OTHER SECTORS OF INDUSTRY DID NOT SUPPORT WHAT IT PROPOSED TO DO. DENYING THIS CONSTITUTED BACKTRACKING CORPORATION POINTED OUT IT HAD MADE ITS TRADE UNION ANNOUNCEMENT IN CONTEXT OF CHAIRMAN OPPENHEIMER'S RECENT CALL FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY (REFTEL).

3. COMMENTING ON VILJOEN'S WARNING, TUCSA GENERAL SECRETARY ARTHUR GROBBELAAR MADE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

QTE THE MINISTER OF LABOUR MUST COME OUT OF HIS IDEOLOGICAL IVORY TOWER. HE NEEDS TO RECOGNISE THAT THERE IS INCREASING CONCERN AMONG INDUSTRIALISTS AND ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH AFRICA THAT THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IS NOT SATISFACTORY AND AND DOES NOT SPELL GOOD BUSINESS FOR THEM.

QTE HE MUST STOP BEING A THREAT TO BOTH OUR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY. UNQTE.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE VILJOEN'S HARD LINE IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT OUTCOME OF PRESENT PHASE OF SKIRMISHING IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SECTOR WILL BE AGREEMENT TO SET UP SOME FORM OF COMMISSION OF INQUIRY. FROM SAG POINT OF VIEW THIS WOULD HAVE ADVANTAGE OF PROVIDING DEFENSIBLE PRETEXT FOR POSTPONING MAKING BASIC POLICY DECISION IN THIS VITAL AREA FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR OR TWO. FROM BLACK AND ENLIGHTENED WHITE POINT OF VIEW IT WOULD CONSTITUTE MORAL VICTORY AS WELL AS MOVEMENT, HOWEVER GLACIAL, IN RIGHT DIRECTION. WITH BLACK LABOR UNREST SHOWING NO SIGNS OF DIMINISHING, UNCLASSIFIED

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HOWEVER, AND WITH BUSINESS LEADERS BECOMING MORE AND MORE CONCERNED ABOUT INCREASINGLY OBVIOUS INADEQUACIES OF PRESENT INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM, THERE IS REAL POSSIBILITY SAG WILL FIND IT NECESSARY TO FACE THIS ISSUE LONG BEFORE RESPONSIBLE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY WOULD BE IN POSITION TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS. GUTHRIE

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